

News from Cheltenham Animal Shelter



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Welcome to our autumn newsletter

I am delighted to share the autumn 2026 edition of our newsletter.

It's difficult to believe that we are already approaching autumn, although we are certainly grateful for the arrival of some cooler weather after the heat of recent months.

The hot weather has brought its share of challenges for our animals and our events. We made the difficult decision to cancel our annual Summer Open Day because of high temperatures but, despite this, we have continued to enjoy and celebrate our centenary year in style.

Our special centenary celebrations have included a wonderful Ceilidh, which brought together supporters, volunteers and colleagues for an evening of music, dancing and laughter. We also marked the occasion with a memorable Centenary Ball, celebrating a century of achievement and community support.

We were delighted to receive the SoGlos Lifestyle & Community Charity of the Year award, a wonderful recognition of the dedication, hard work, and commitment of our staff, volunteers, and supporters. It was a proud moment and a fitting tribute as we mark our centenary year.

There is still plenty to look forward to. On pages eight and nine of this newsletter, you can find out more about our plans for the rest of the year.

As we move into the autumn months, we would like to thank everyone who has helped make our centenary year so special. Your support, enthusiasm and generosity have enabled us to celebrate this landmark year in a truly memorable way, and we look forward to sharing more highlights with you in the months ahead.

Best wishes from myself and the team here at the Shelter.

Peter Newcombe, General Manager



Ready to adopt? Here's how!

Adopting a rescue pet is incredibly rewarding, but it is also a long-term commitment. Our rehoming process is designed to match every animal with a home where they have the best chance of settling and thriving.

Find the right pet

Visit www.gawa.org.uk/adopt-a-pet to browse the animals looking for homes. Each pet has a profile explaining their personality and needs, and new animals arrive regularly, so keep checking back.

Some pets are listed as needing an adult-only home. This may be due to their temperament, information from a previous home, or simply because we do not know enough about their history to safely recommend a home with younger children.

Apply to adopt

When you find a pet you'd like to adopt, use the link on their profile to email us. We may ask a few questions before sending an application form for you to complete. This helps us understand your lifestyle, so we can find you the right match.

What happens next?

Some animals receive many applications. If your application is shortlisted, our rehoming team will try to contact you within seven days. If you do not hear from us, it means your application has not been taken forward for that animal. Please continue to look and apply in the future.

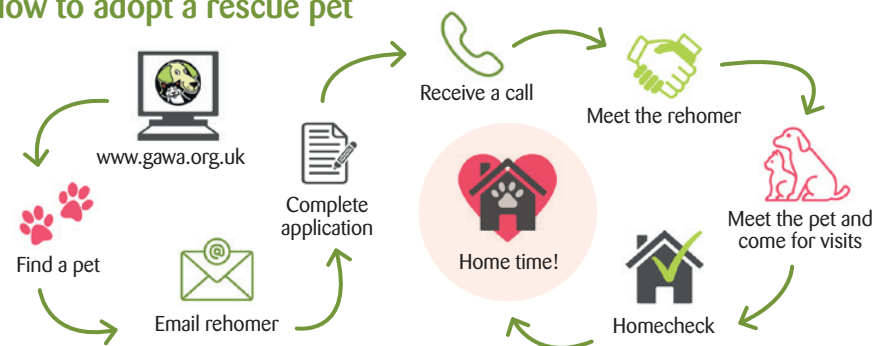
Meet your new companion

If your application progresses, you will be invited to meet the animal. Some pets may need more than one visit, especially dogs who require introductions to family members or resident dogs. Any home checks required will happen before adoption day.

Adoption fees

Our current fees: dogs £300, cats £125, rabbits £60, guinea pigs £30, other small animals from £15.

How to adopt a rescue pet



Small furries

Bean

Bean is an adorable four-month-old guinea pig looking for a loving forever home. His two great passions in life are food and comfort.

Like many guinea pigs, Bean loves his pellets and fresh greens, with coriander and parsley being his all-time favourite treats. If there's a tasty snack on offer, Bean will be first in line to investigate. When he's not enjoying his meals, Bean can usually be found relaxing in one of his comfy houses or his hides.

Bean is looking for a spacious enclosure where he can enjoy plenty of places to hide and lots of delicious hay and enrichment with another friendly male guinea pig companion.



Coco

Eight-month-old Coco is a sweet and endearing little gerbil with plenty of energy packed into her tiny paws! She recently came into our care following the sad loss of her companion and is now hoping to find a loving home where she can be introduced to another female gerbil.

A little shy at first, Coco is exceptionally quick on her feet and loves tunnelling through her bedding, hiding beneath her wheel and scampering about in her pen!

Coco is looking for a caring and confident owner who is happy to carry out the bonding process at home, giving this lovely little lady the companionship she deserves.



Seymour & Snickers

This adorable duo came into our care separately as strays but have formed the sweetest bond here at the Shelter.

Friendly and gentle, they love snuggling side by side, greeting their carers, and enjoying a tasty feast of fresh veggies, herbs, and dandelion leaves. Seymour's calm nature has helped shy Snickers grow in confidence, making them a truly special pair.

Both have Pasteurella, a respiratory condition, which is currently being supported with medication. Despite this, they're happy, thriving and ready to begin their next chapter in a loving home together.

These small animals may have been adopted by the time you receive your newsletter, but there are plenty more who need homes.



A new friend and a new beginning for Reggie

Reggie came to the Shelter after his bonded partner passed away. He took it very hard and stopped eating. Sadly, his owners were not in a position to find a new friend for him so they brought him to the Shelter.

After spending just three weeks in our care he found a new home with Eleanor and a new friend in Fudge who was also adopted from the Shelter.

"Reggie has really landed on his little feet! He has grown into a confident, cheeky boy whose hunger is never fully satisfied. Seeing his little face every morning is a highlight of our day."

He successfully bonded with our existing guinea pig Fudge, settling into a big brother role. It has amazed us how gentle he is with sweet little Fudge, despite being far more confident.

Fudge has grown in confidence since meeting Reggie, especially since Fudge had a successful operation to remove a cyst on his bum. Reggie has been the perfect addition to our family."



Reggie



Did you know?

Guinea pigs are highly social animals that thrive on companionship and should never live alone unless advised by a vet for medical reasons. In the wild, they live in groups, using one another for comfort, communication and security. Living with another guinea pig allows them to express natural behaviours such as chatting, grooming, playing and resting together. A compatible companion can also help reduce stress and build confidence, leading to happier, healthier pets. That's why we only rehome guinea pigs in compatible pairs or groups, or to homes with a suitable guinea pig waiting to be introduced.

Cats corner

Sammy

Nine-year-old Ragdoll Sammy came into our care when his owner's circumstances changed and they had to move abroad.

Finding Shelter life quite overwhelming, Sammy is looking for a calm and loving home where he can build his confidence. He is quiet and gentle by nature, enjoying affection on his terms and will make a wonderful companion.

A calm pet-free home with teenagers for company would suit Sammy perfectly. He would also love access to a garden where he can stretch his legs.



Primrose

Pretty nine-year-old Primrose is an endearing semi-longhair cat who adores love and affection.

When she's not tucking into her favourite meals and tasty treats, you'll find her happily batting her beloved ping-pong balls around for hours of fun!

Primrose would love to be the only pet in her new home. She's currently doing well on a special diet to support a urinary condition, and although she also has a heart murmur, she's happy in herself and will simply need routine veterinary check-ups to monitor her health.



Aoife

Beautiful two-year-old Aoife has overcome so much already. Found abandoned in a property along with some other cats, she arrived in our care and soon welcomed four adorable kittens, becoming a wonderful mum.

Now it's her time to be cherished, as she looks for a safe, calm and loving home where she can continue to build her confidence gradually each day.

A little shy at first, Aoife enjoys gentle fuss and reassurance along with her favourite biscuits!

These cats may have been adopted by the time you receive your newsletter, but there are plenty more who need homes.



A fresh start for Brie

When a delivery driver discovered Brie abandoned in a bin bag, she wasn't alone. Inside the bag were her three kittens and another pregnant cat, all in desperate need of help.

Thankfully, when our vets examined Brie and her kittens, they were found to be in good general health.

Brie was treated for conjunctivitis, spayed, microchipped, and given flea and worm treatment. She was still feeding her kittens, but as she didn't have much milk our team supplemented their intake with kitten formula.

Brie's kittens were two males named Edam and Colby, and a young female called Feta. Over the following weeks they grew stronger and once they were old enough to be weaned, they were made ready for new homes. Nearly three months after Brie came to the Shelter, she also found her forever home.

Brie now called Nala, has settled well with her new young family and is enjoying the safe, loving home she always deserved.

Her new owner sent us a wonderful message:

"After losing my beloved cat, the house felt incredibly quiet without a feline companion, and we thought Nala might be a good match for my family. As soon as we met her, we knew she could be the perfect addition, and we adopted her in June.

She is full of character - very cheeky and mischievous. She loves hunting bugs in the garden, stealing any unattended food she can find, and playing with her many toys. She also loves a tickle behind the ears.

Life with Nala is never boring, and we love watching her confidence and personality grow as she settles in."



2026, what a year... so far!

2026 has already been a year filled with unforgettable moments. While our teams have continued caring for vulnerable pets, our 100th year has also given us the opportunity to reflect on our history, bring people together and share more about the work we do. Here is a snapshot of 2026 so far – and what is still to come.

Animal adoptions

Every adoption represents a new beginning, and thanks to our supporters, so far this year, we've been able to rehome nearly 300 pets.

From older cats who need extra medical support, to large, energetic dogs who need an active lifestyle, and rabbits looking for a family who can provide the time they need to thrive; pets of all types have found their new families.



Gerbils Noah and Roy spent six months at the Shelter. Now named Beans and Cheese, they're clearly loving life with their new family.



Kola was nearly two when adopted. Now living his best life, he enjoys great walks and a comfy sofa for snoozing.



Bea was a nervous cat who needed surgery to remove kidney stones. She's now settled into a loving home, receiving the care she needs to stay healthy.



Could you offer one of our pets a new home this year?

Visit www.gawa.org.uk/adopt-a-pet

A year of community and celebration

This year we have attended more than 30 local events and hosted two new celebrations – our Summer Ceilidh and Centenary Ball.

On the 3rd of October we are holding an **Autumn Dog Show**. Full of fun, activities, food and drink, please do come along and enjoy the afternoon at the Shelter. Why not take part in our **Fire and Ice Challenge** on 14th October and don't forget our annual **Festive Fayre** on 26th November.

To find out more about our activities visit www.gawa.org.uk/events-calendar



Our Summer Ceilidh held at the Tithe Barn in Bishop's Cleeve

Developing the Shelter

This year we have continued improving our animal facilities. Despite rising costs and the challenge of upgrading ageing buildings, grants, donations and local support have enabled improvements including safer dog kennel hatches, stronger rabbit pen security, and enhancements to our sensory garden and pool.



To fundraise, or get your organisation involved www.gawa.org.uk/support-us



Our new hatches are safer for the dogs and our staff

Keeping children and pets safe

Our education programmes help young people learn about animal welfare and pet safety. This year, our free Dog Bite Prevention & Child Safety talk has reached 566 children, helping them understand dog behaviour and learn safe ways to interact with dogs.

During school holidays, our Animal Days sessions give 5–16 year-olds hands-on experience caring for rescue animals while learning about responsible pet ownership, reaching a further 319 children.



Our Education Team at Abbeymead Primary School



Find out more about our education programmes visit www.gawa.org.uk/education

Researching the Shelter's history

We are still collecting stories from people who have adopted, volunteered, visited or supported us over the years. Every memory helps tell the story of the Shelter and the people who have made the past 100 years possible.



Share your stories of the Shelter and read about our history at www.gawa.org.uk/100-years



Read about our history online or pick up a brochure at the Shelter

Small steps to healthier smiles

Just like us, pets need regular dental care to keep their teeth and gums healthy. Here are some simple ways to support your pet's dental health.



Lola's health check revealed she had gingivitis and needed some teeth removed. She has now received the care she needed and has been rehomed.

Dogs and cats

Feed the right food

A balanced diet can help reduce plaque and tartar build-up. Dry food and sugar-free dental treats encourage chewing, which can help keep teeth clean, while oral sprays may also help support good oral health. Limit sugar, which can contribute to gum disease, and bones are best avoided, as they can fracture teeth and cause other issues.

Brush your pet's teeth regularly

Daily brushing (or at least three times a week) is the best way to maintain good oral health – human toothpaste is not suitable for dogs or cats.

Many cats and dogs will accept toothbrushing if introduced gradually. Start by gently touching their mouth and teeth, then progress to a pet-specific toothbrush and pet-safe toothpaste. Keep sessions short and reward your pet to make it a positive experience.

Speak to your vet

Your vet can identify problems early, avoiding more serious issues later and ensuring your pet remains comfortable and pain-free. If your pet displays symptoms such as plaque or tartar deposits, red, damaged, or bleeding gums, persistent bad breath, discoloured, loose, or missing teeth, difficulty chewing, or blood in their food and water bowls, then contact your vet for advice.

Rabbits

Rabbits' teeth grow continuously throughout their life, making dental care especially important.

Feed plenty of hay

Around 85% of a rabbit's diet should consist of hay. Without enough hay, teeth won't wear down and can become overgrown and uneven, causing sharp spurs that may injure the tongue or cheeks.

Check your rabbit's teeth regularly

Examine your rabbit weekly for signs of overgrown teeth, difficulty eating, drooling, weight loss, or swelling around the jaw and face. If you have any concerns speak to your vet.



Frank came to us with teeth spurs that his owner couldn't afford to treat. He received dental care at the Shelter and is now doing well.

Great days out with your dog

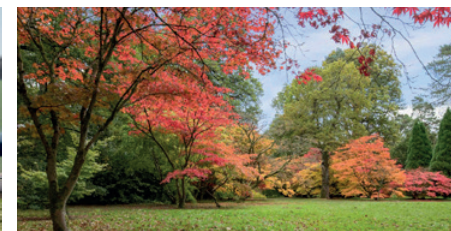
Make the most of autumn with your four-legged friend at great local destinations.



Cotswold Farm Park

Join a guided one-hour dog walk from Cotswold Farm Park at 8.30am on the first Sunday of every month. Tickets are £2.50 (coffee is provided afterwards). While dogs can't enter the Farm Park itself, they're welcome in the Ox Shed Bar & Restaurant.

www.cotswoldfarmpark.co.uk



Batsford Arboretum

Home to a unique collection of beautiful and rare trees, shrubs and bamboos. Dogs are welcome in the arboretum, garden centre and café, but must be kept on short leads. Extendable leads are not permitted.

www.batsarb.co.uk



Cerney House Gardens

These romantic gardens are a wonderful place to visit. Let the scents and colour surround you and explore the organic kitchen garden. Dogs are welcome on leads. You can visit the honesty café or the dog-friendly Bathurst Arms pub opposite.

www.cerneygardens.com



Cotswold Wildlife Park & Gardens

Home to over 260 species of animals set in 160 acres of parkland. Dogs are welcome provided they stay on lead and under adult control. There are some areas where dogs are not permitted including the restaurant and gift shop.

www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk

Please check the destination's website before visiting.
Admission charges and restrictions may apply.

Dog tails

Five-year-old **Theo** is a handsome greyhound who was signed over into our care. He is in good health, but has a little stiffness in his joints.

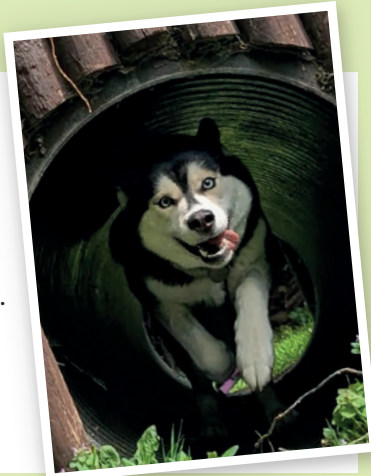
Theo is a lively boy so would love a home that has a garden where he can potter about. He is affectionate and loves cuddles, often falling asleep on the laps of our animal carers.



Theo would like a home without other dogs, cats or small animals, and needs someone to be with him a lot of the time.

Beautiful **Nala** is a seven-year old Siberian Husky with striking blue eyes. Full of character, she loves exploring the outdoors, and brings plenty of husky charm and playful mischief to everyday life.

Nala is independent in spirit but enjoys affection. Once she feels safe and has built a bond with you, she will reward you with her incredible loyalty and unwavering devotion. She will thrive in a calm, adult-only, pet-free home.



Seven-year-old **Zuki** is a handsome Staffie cross. This sweet boy enjoys life's simple pleasures, from cosy cuddles and playtime to peaceful snoozes on the sofa.

Zuki loves trips out in the car, and is happy to meet people. A little sensitive to noisy environments, he would do best in a calm home with older teenagers and a secure garden to enjoy. In return, Zuki will offer his family loyal companionship, affection and endless amounts of love.



From layby to loved: Poko's happy ever after

Six-year-old Poko the Akita cross, was in a very bad way when she was found in a layby and brought to the Shelter. She was examined by our vets, and they found her to be severely underweight with poor muscle condition and significant dental tartar. Blood and urine tests were performed, which ruled out underlying medical conditions, so she was placed on a weight-gain plan and treated for a severe ear infection and bacterial skin condition.



Despite all that she'd been through, Poko was wonderfully friendly to everyone she met at the Shelter and even took part in our PAWS for Wellbeing programme, which offers adults in need of a mental health boost the opportunity to come to the Shelter and spend time with our rescue animals.

After two months in our care, Poko found the happy ending she so deserved with Chris and Sinead who knew she was meant for them from the moment they saw her.

A next step for Poko is for her to do some therapy dog training and help her have a long, happy life. You can find her story on Instagram @princesspokodog

"We saw a picture of Poko on Instagram and fell in love instantly. It was exactly three years to the day since we lost our last dog Hunter (who we also adopted from CAS) so it felt right to book an appointment to see this gorgeous girl."

On our first visit, Poko took the opportunity to smile and sit on our laps and that pretty much sold it - we wanted to take her that very same day! As we heard more about Poko's story, it broke our hearts. On our second visit, we went for a walk, and we saw how loving and gentle she was. On our final third visit, we met her indoors and she tried to get the pup cup we had brought her out of the bin... that's the dog for us. Then the day finally came to take her home. Yay!"



These dogs may have been adopted by the time you receive your newsletter, but there are plenty more who need homes.

What does responsible dog ownership really mean?

Bringing a dog into your life is one of the most rewarding experiences you can have. From the joy of a wagging tail when you walk through the door to the companionship they provide every day, dogs quickly become much-loved members of the family. But owning a dog is also a lifelong responsibility and giving them the best possible life means more than providing food, walks and somewhere to sleep.

Whether you're considering getting your first dog, have recently welcomed a new four-legged friend, or have been a dog owner for many years, it's always worth taking a moment to think about what responsible dog ownership really means.



At Cheltenham Animal Shelter, we know that responsible ownership starts with understanding your dog's needs. Every dog is an individual, with their own personality, behaviour and requirements, and being a responsible owner means being prepared to support them throughout every stage of their life.



Read more about responsible dog ownership on our website and download the Dog Ownership Guide at www.gawa.org.uk/news or scan the QR Code.

To help dog owners, **Dogs Trust** and the **RSPCA** have developed the **Dog Ownership Guide (DOG)**

– a practical resource designed to help owners understand the key responsibilities involved in caring for a dog. The guide focuses on five essential areas of responsible ownership:



A Good Life: making sure your dog's physical, emotional and behavioural needs are met, including appropriate food, exercise, enrichment, companionship, training and veterinary care.

Safe and Secure: taking steps to keep your dog, your family and other people safe. This includes providing a secure home and garden, understanding your dog's behaviour and taking appropriate precautions when out and about.

Good Citizen: being considerate of other people and animals, particularly when enjoying public spaces. Responsible owners should understand and follow the law, clean up after their dogs and help ensure their pets are well behaved and under control.

We see every day how important it is for owners to have the right knowledge and support. Positive training, preventative healthcare, understanding canine behaviour and thinking ahead can all make a huge difference to a dog's quality of life and help build a stronger relationship between dogs and their owners.

Responsible dog ownership isn't about being perfect. It's about being

Lifetime Commitment: recognising that getting a dog is a commitment for their entire life. From puppyhood through to their senior years, their needs will change, and responsible owners need to be prepared to adapt and plan for their care, including unexpected costs and changes in circumstances.

Community: understanding that responsible dog ownership benefits everyone. By caring for our dogs properly, respecting others and helping our pets become confident and well-socialised companions, we can create safer and happier communities for both people and animals.

informed, prepared and committed to giving your dog the care, guidance and love they need to thrive.

Whether you already share your home with a dog or are thinking about welcoming one into your family, we encourage you to take a few minutes to read the Dog Ownership Guide and discover some simple ways you can help give your dog the very best life.



Shop and help animals

Looking for a bargain, a unique find or a thoughtful gift?

Our two Cheltenham Animal Shelter charity shops are packed with pre-loved treasures – and every purchase helps animals in need.

Both shops offer a fantastic mix of clothing, accessories, books, homeware, gifts and more. There's always something new to discover, so pop in and have a browse.

If you have good quality donations that are suitable to sell in one of our shops please drop them in.

We love good quality:

- Women's, men's and kids' clothes
- Bags, shoes and accessories
- Books, toys and games (toys should have the CE / UKCA mark)
- Homewares and crafts
- Seasonal items and gifts

A full list of what we can and cannot take is available at www.gawa.org.uk/charity-shop

Winchcombe Street shop

Monday to Saturday:
9:30am to 5.30pm

Sundays and Bank Holidays:
CLOSED

Find us at:
25 Winchcombe Street, GL52 2LZ



Gardners Lane shop

Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday and Friday:
10am to 4:30pm

Wednesday: 10am to 4pm

Saturday: 11am to 3pm

Sundays and Bank
Holidays: CLOSED

Find us at Cheltenham Animal Shelter,
Gardners Lane, GL51 9JW



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

Cheltenham Animal Shelter, Gardners Lane, GL51 9JW

Call us: 01242 523521 Visit us: www.gawa.org.uk

Charity registration number: 1081019

